REMARKS

Reconsideration of the Office Action of October 10, 2006 is respectfully requested. In the present amendment claims 1, 3, 7, 9, 10-11, 14, 23-24, 31, 34 and 48 have been amended, claims 2, 4-6, 8, 15-17, 21-22, 28-29, 32-33, 35-29 and 42-47 have been cancelled and claims 49-60 have been added. It is considered that no new matter has been introduced by the present claim amendment and that the amended claim set is in full compliance with 35 USC 112, first and second paragraphs.

While claim 1 has been amended to even more clearly distinguish over the prior art and to more fully present a grouping of advantageous characteristics made available by the present invention, a discussion of the prior art rejection of claim 1 and some of its dependents is provided below.

In the Office Action, independent claim 1 and its dependents 13, 14, 18, 19 and 41 were rejected as being considered obvious under the combination of Bonaddio in view of Heck and Veilleux. As described in prior responses, the Bonaddio embodiment features a foam pad outer layer that was shown in the prior responses as being of a type that is considered made by way of a compressing roller set wherein a foam pad is fed through the rollers to extract off the undesired foam and leave the pattern shown in the Bonaddio patent. An example of this pattern formation through use of a compressing set of rollers is seen in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,534,208 and 5,688,538 to the same Assignee as in Bonaddio. The Figures below illustrate the mechanism used to form patterned foam layers as well as a sample pattern sharing similarities with that in Bonaddio outer foam layer wrap.

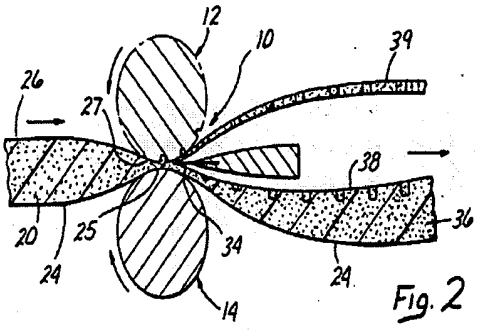

Fig. 2

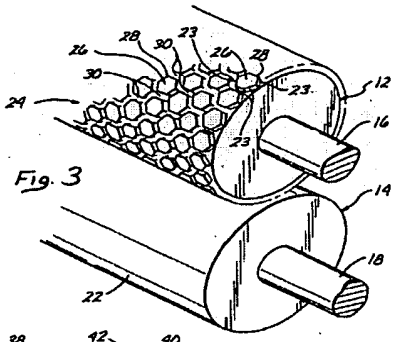

Fig. 3

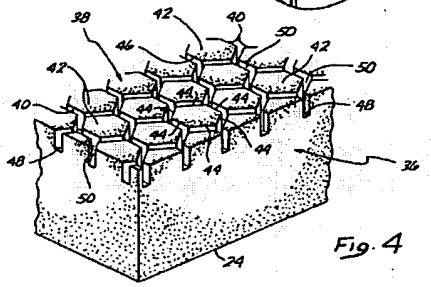

Fig. 4

As seen from a review of U.S. Patent Nos. 5,534,208 and 5,688,538, the feeding through of foam pads through roller sets is a fast way of producing desired contouring in a foam layer. As presented in Bonaddio, this easily produced foam layer can serve as a wrap about a core body that has a desired configuration for achieving the desired overall pillow shape once the wrap is adhered to that central core. This also allows for different material uses to achieve desired surface and support characteristics (e.g., the thinner foam wrap layer that is closest to the user's head can be formed of a different material than that of the core material in an effort to achieve a desired feel and support combination).

In recognition in the Office Action that Bonaddio fails to present a pillow formed of a monolithic structure, reliance is placed on the intra-oral bite down pillow of Heck, and the Office Action references the following passage appearing on col. 2, lines 19-22 in support of the proposed modification of Bonaddio based on Heck:

> *"Means is provided to maintain the pillow as a monolithic structure preventing portions of the pillow from separating during the surgical procedure"*

The above noted "means for maintaining the pillow as a monolithic structure" is described in the body of the Heck reference as follows in Col. 3, lines 32-38:

> *"As seen in FIG. 3, an intra-oral cavity cushion device 3 is provided. The device 3 includes a* ***pillow 21****, a finger tab 24 and* ***means designated generally 26 for maintaining the pillow as a monolithic structure*** *during storage, use and removal."*

The means 26 is further described in Col. 4, lines 45 plus, as follows:

> *"Means 26 is provided to retain the pillow 21 as a monolithic structure with a sheet exterior. In the case of the structure illustrated in FIG. 3, the means 26 includes a retainer 33 that prevents the exterior sheet and interior material from unrolling or separating. The retainer 33 includes an adhesive tape such as Tegaderm which can encircle the pillow 21 around a substantial part thereof and is secured to the exterior fabric sheet or encircle the entirety of the pillow's outer periphery and be secured to itself and the exterior fabric sheet."*

In the Office Action, the following is indicated in support of the assertion in the Office Action that it would have been obvious to modify Bonaddio to be a monolithic foam body:

> *Heck '514 expressly teaches the preferred use of a monolithic structure of an intra-oral pillow to prevent separation of material in response to pressure during use (Col. 2, lines 19 through 22)"*

This assertion that Heck teaches forming the Bonaddio device as a monolithic foam structure rather than the foam layer wrap around a core configuration of Bonaddio is respectfully traversed. As explained above, the Heck means for maintaining a monolithic structure is not a teaching of converting a wrap around layer with interior core to a monolithic foam body as asserted in the office action. Rather, Heck actually teaches adding a wrap around device such as a tape wrap to maintain the integrity of the core material internal to that wrap, which core can be formed of absorbent fibers or of a foam body. Accordingly, Heck teaches just the opposite of combining an outer layer foam layer and core into a unitary or monolithic foam body by its teaching of adding a wrap for structural integrity. Furthermore in reference to the base reference to Bonaddio, as explained above, the wrap around foam layer about the core would have been

deemed advantageous by one of ordinary skill in the art for the benefits noted above (e.g. quick formation of a patterned surface and different material potential).

Accordingly, the combination of Bonaddio in view of Heck in view of Veilleux et al is respectfully submitted not to present a prima facie case of obviousness against claim 1 and each of its dependents.

In addition, claim 1 has been amended to even more clearly distinguish over the art and is considered to clearly present allowable subject matter. The claimed arrangement set forth in claim 1 provides an advantageous pillow that combines various features to present a pillow that avoids issues associated with the prior art including poor support (e.g., visco elastic material was considered in and of itself to not provide sufficient return support as seen by the discussion in US Patent No. 6,602,579 and even the arrangement in Veilleux wherein visco layers are recognized as needing a degree of bolstering due to the poor "spring back" capability – a feature lost in visco material in favor of the benefit of providing foam that has close and soft conformation to a depressing object) and/or high heat build up (another deficiency associated with foam material and particularly with visco material due to the close conformance and density of the material).

The present invention provides a unitary body that provides both good support and feel while lessening the above noted problems associated with the prior art pillows such as the high complexity associated with a bolster reliance pillow (e.g., the present invention provides a monolithic body still capable of providing suitable support to all zones of potential user contact) or excessive heat build up (e.g., the present invention's projection arrangement still provides for heat dissipation even despite the use of, for example, highly conforming visco foam).

As seen from claim 1, there is provided a monolithic visco foam pillow with integrated projections providing different zones of support which projections extend up off a main-body and include a ridge extension projection that has a configuration that works well with an intermediate support zone made up of projections that are spaced apart to provide main-body exposed regions and a central zone of different support characteristics. Thus, as exemplified by Figures 7 and 8 of the present application, there is a combination of good body shape conformance to the configuration of the head of a user, a combination of different support characteristics, and there is addressed the poor spring back and heat build up characteristics of visco foam. For example, reference is made to Figures 7 and 8 of the present application showing the different density

levels of support brought about by the different support zone characteristics that provide for absorption and partial absorption of various projections in the common material main-body. These different absorption levels of the projections into the main-body provide for a high level of support in the regions needing the most support while still providing for unblocked breathing passageway for other parts, particularly when side sleeping (e.g.. the chin region shown in Figure 7 and the adjacent channels provided by the independent projections separated by exposed regions of the main-body). As noted visco-elastic material provides little spring back, but the absorption degree of the projections also helps provide added support in desired regions whereas the projections in the immediate area are not all compressed completely as to help address heat dissipation concerns. Each of independent claims 1, 23 and 56 describe a monolithic foam pillow having advantageous characteristics as outlined above and which are features lacking in the relied upon prior art.

In the Office Action, independent claims 23 and 31 were rejected based on the combination of Bonaddio in view of Schaeffer and further in view of Dixon, with Dixon being introduced to present a ride edge extension.

As noted above, the amended claim 23 includes reference to the main-body and the various projection zones as being formed as a monolithic foam pillow and thus the arguments raised above concerning the deficiencies in the Bonaddio and Heck asserted combination are repeated. Furthermore, a review of Dixon reveals it teaches making the ridge extension the predominate support structure both relative to height and lateral depth and, as explained above, the teachings of references such as US Patent No. 5,534,208 shows a compression roller technique to form the patterned foam wrap in Bonaddio, which one of ordinary skill in the art would understand is not well suited for handling an edge extension such as that in Dixon with its predominant height relative to adjacent projections teaching.

Moreover, claims such as new independent claim 56 references the above described venting area provided by the exposed surface of the main-body provided between the interior region of the ridge extension and the adjacent row of projections. The ridge extension teaching in Dixon teaches having the ridge extension abut at its interior side the interior projection set. Claims such as dependent claims 51 and 55 depending off of independent claims 1 and 23 further differentiate over the asserted combination involving Dixon in describing the ridge extension and

adjacent projection being of an arrangement which achieves the benefits as described above relative to the Figure 7 and 8 discussion wherein the ridge extension is dimensioned for combination with the adjacent row of projections to avoid excessive neck support presentment while providing flow channeling and, at the same time, providing good contact support as is achieved with the relatively large in lateral length and sufficiently high (relative to the ridge extension) adjacent projections to provide the desired good support with the material involved.

A comparison of each of the currently pending independent claims 1, 23 and 56 relative to all of the prior art references relied upon in the Office Action of October 10, 2006 reveals that those references fail to disclose or suggest the claimed arrangement of the advantageously arranged pillow of the present application.

Also, Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment and the above remarks obviate the outstanding rejections in this case, thereby placing the application in condition for immediate allowance. Allowance of this application is earnestly solicited. Also, if any fees are due in connection with the filing of this amendment, such as fees under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, please charge the fees to Deposit Account 02-4300; Order No. 032161.066.

Respectfully submitted,

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